



TRAVEL with EASe Newsletter

March 2019



With St. Patrick's Day this month, I thought talking about Ireland would be timely. Have you been to Ireland, is it "on the list" or not really someplace you are interested in because you don't know that much about it.

Ireland is a land of dramatic coastlines and unspoiled landscapes. Cities that welcome you. A beauty that will delight you. There is something for every visitor. Festivals celebrating families, music, and food; museums and ancient forts; and castles you can stay in. Ireland is a magical place that will surprise and delight you.

According to the folks in Ireland, St. Patrick's Day is not an Irish holiday, it is an American holiday. The first time I went to Ireland I was told that they adopted our holiday because they liked to party. Now, St. Patrick's Day is a big deal in Ireland.

With safety being a top priority, I can tell you I traveled alone in Ireland and felt perfectly safe. I was in Dublin and thought I might have gone the wrong way. When I stopped a number of people also stopped and asked me if I needed help. I was not aware the cones in the road lit up at night and it made me wonder. Everyone was helpful and willing to talk.

Dublin is amazing. There are so many varied things to do. Music is everywhere. Markets, history, shopping. A couple of historical things that you should try and see while there is St. Patrick's Cathedral and the Book of Kells located in Trinity College.

While traveling from Dublin toward Killarney, if you are into Waterford Crystal - you definitely want to stop in Waterford and check out their store and if possible, get the tour.

Cobh is the equivalent of our Ellis Island. When people were leaving to come to the United States, they left from Cobh. This is a good starting point if you are interested in tracing your Irish roots. One thing I learned is people with the same last name would live in one area of Ireland. It is a great help if you want to figure out where in Ireland you are from. If your last name is Sullivan chances are good you are from County Cork or County Kerry.



No visit to Ireland is complete without driving the Ring of Kerry and visiting Blarney Castle. You can travel the Ring of Kerry in one day but take time to visit the villages and stop and see the sites as you travel. This is one of the most popular routes to drive in Ireland. (If you want to drive this on your own, just remember they drive on the left in Ireland.) The land around Blarney Castle is beautiful. Walk around and find the hidden gardens. You can, of course, go and

kiss the Blarney Stone if you are looking for the gift of gab or go shopping in Blarney Woolen Mills. They have everything you can imagine here that relates to Ireland and are able to tell you the history of things. An example is Aran Sweaters. These sweaters are made in Ireland and the pattern of the sweater would relate to one specific family. That way, if a fishing vessel failed to return home and a body washed up on the shore, they would know which family he was a part of.

Cliffs of Moher has been voted as one of the most beautiful places on earth. The cliffs go for about nine miles and are approximately 509-700 feet in elevation. Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince and The Princess Bride are two movies that have been filmed here.



Shannon is home to one of the international airports in Ireland. There are five of them there. Here it is interesting to learn about the folklore of this region. One of the stories I was told was about the building of the airport in Shannon. Right in the middle of where they planned a runway, there was a fairy tree. The Irish workers refused to move the tree (you don't mess with the fairies). So, the construction team brought in workers from Europe. After a number of accidents, some rather major, and the cost of construction going up more than they were comfortable

with, the planners moved the runway and all went well. You hear stories similar to this about the construction of roads. One of the main roads in the Shannon area you actually drive around a fairy tree.

Also, remember you are in a different country and certain words have different meanings. A "hooker" in Ireland is a boat and to "knock someone up" is to wake someone up. Our tour guide told the priest leading a group of nuns around Ireland that they were going to knock up one of the nuns that were late. He went off the deep end until it was explained to him what they meant.

Smoking is not allowed in public areas and workplaces including pubs, restaurants, hotels, and taxis.

Giants Causeway is one place I have wanted to visit but haven't along with Northern Ireland. I'll get there one day. It's on my list.

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